

# TIMES-VIRGINIAN

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"In the Heart of the Dark Tobacco Belt"

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## Dark Tobacco Situation Serious

The growers of Virginia dark tobacco, together with those who do business with them, are facing a very serious situation at present. The Board of Governors of the United States Tobacco Growers' Cooperative Association, which was organized in 1925, has issued a warning early in the season to the effect that there was an overproduction of this type of tobacco, especially of the lower grades. Attention was called to the Government figures showing that exports of this type of tobacco had dropped from approximately 48,000,000 pounds in 1923 to only 20,000,000 pounds in 1925. Since that time, the extreme dry weather throughout the dark fired area has prevented planting of the bulk of the crop at the proper season, which will probably mean the production of a low quality crop in 1926.

But a more serious situation still has resulted from the recent decision of Judge Meekins throwing the Tri-State Tobacco Growers' Association into the hands of receivers. It is this decision that cooperation will probably mean that the 24,000,000 pounds of dark fired tobacco now in the hands of the association will have to be marketed earlier than usual by the association, which will probably mean the production of a low quality crop in 1926.

Can anything of a practical nature be done to meet this situation and prevent low prices for dark fired tobacco during the next few years? If Judge Meekins' receivership order is sustained and the present state of dark tobacco held by the association are forced on the market, and the Tri-State Tobacco Growers' Association entirely ceases operation, there is probably very little that can be done to help the situation in 1926. However, the experience of the past four years justifies the opinion that there is much that can be done by the intelligent cooperation of farmers and other business men in the dark belt for the years immediately following. Methods can be worked out for cutting down the production of this type of tobacco and handling present and future surpluses. This may seem a broad statement, but if we will consider what has been accomplished by only 50% of the growers with very little cooperation from other business men since 1920 we will see that it is possible of accomplishment.

In 1920, over 45,000,000 pounds of dark fired tobacco was produced in Virginia, which sold over the auction floors at a price of \$9.17 per hundred pounds. Warehouse charges and selling costs had to be deducted from this. The net price received by the average grower was much less than the cost of production, but the buyers stated that they could not pay more on account of overproduction and lessened consumption. In order to meet this situation, the growers formed a cooperative association to keep the surplus stocks from coming on the market.

Over 50% of the growers of dark tobacco in Virginia joined this association and from 1922 to 1925 delivered to the association 58,687,104 pounds of Virginia dark fired tobacco out of a total production of approximately 177,000,000 pounds. And in spite of rapidly declining exports, the association has been able to command an average net price of \$12.48 per hundred pounds for this tobacco, in addition, they have paid for approximately \$300,000,000 worth of warehouse property and land, and have paid for approximately 24,000,000 pounds of tobacco on which they have been paid certain advances.

In other words, through cooperation, the members of the association during the past four years, in the face of decreasing exports, have netted practically 50 per cent more than was paid them for the 1920 crop under the auction system, and more than 50 per cent above what they average for the pre-war

## Moore and Mrs. John Mickle, of Lynchburg, Misses Bessie, Nellie and Ethel Moore and Ennis C. and W. M. Moore, of Appomattox.

The deceased was a member of the Poplar Methodist Church in which he was a steward. He had long been connected with the affairs of the county, having served first as a member of the court house district school board, and later as a member of the board of supervisors, of which body he was chairman. Some months ago on account of failing health he was forced to resign this position. Mr. Moore was one of the most successful tobacco planters in this section.

The burial was in the Amherst cemetery—New.

Liberty Church

All services will be resumed in Liberty Church Sunday morning.

Sunday School at 9:30 a. m.

Preaching at 11 a. m. Sermon on the text: "I will be an Independence Day Sermon, commemorating 150 years of American independence."

The B. Y. P. U.'s will meet at 7 p. m.

Evening Worship at 8 o'clock with sermon by the pastor.

All are cordially invited.

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